

Leveeing the Sacramento.

(From the Sutter Banner, Feb. 24th.)

Eds. BANNER.—Being one of your subscribers, and a frequent contributor to your columns, in relation to the levee lands, I propose through your paper, by your permission, to submit to your readers my experience in regard to the subject indicated. I have resided continuously on the Sacramento river for a period of fourteen years, and for the last six years on the east bank about three miles below the much talked of Wilkins' Slough.

In answer to the question, how shall the levee lands be reclaimed, perhaps nine-tenths of the people would say, by a system of canals running through the centers of the levee lands; while probably not more than one-tenth of the people would say, by leveeing the river banks. Until the winter of '68 I believed the river could be made to carry all the water. I drew this conclusion from the belief that the river was as large below the sloughs as above them. In '68 the Supervisors of Colusa County had the Wilkins' Slough filled. In '68 the first rise of the river was not great; yet the river in the neighborhood of the Wilkins' Slough was seven inches higher than ever before known. While the Colusa County levee was being raised, the river was five feet of coming up to high water mark. In view of this fact, the citizens, at this stage of the work, apprehensive of an astrous result, cut the embankment lifting the water into the slough.

Those conversant with these facts regarded them as affording conclusive proof that the river would not carry the water. All thought if the river was seven inches above high water mark at the Wilkins' Slough while it lacked four or five feet at Colusa, that when it came up to high water mark at Colusa it would rise four or five feet above the slough. In this opinion I heartily concurred, regarding my former belief as completely overturned.

The next thing regarded as a test of the question, was the formation of a large Reclamation Company in the counties of Yolo and Colusa, who re-filled Wilkins' Slough and leveed the west bank of the river. So last year—'69—we let the name rest, substantially, that occurred in '68. While the river lacked four or five feet of reaching high water mark at Colusa, it rose twelve inches above the Wilkins' Slough. This was regarded as a clincher; and consequently the plan of confining the river within its banks was pronounced a failure by the mass of the people.

In view of all these developments the people on the east side of the river looked with fear and trembling at the approach of the winter just passed, but at the same time throwing up small levees, extending from a few miles above Wilkins' Slough to a point about eight miles below. These levees were thrown up for the purpose of preventing the levees on the west bank from throwing all the surplus water on the east side of the river. In the winter time with many doubts of success. Winter came, and all know the amount of rain and consequent high waters, equaling any known in the history of the country. And to the surprise of all, the river carried off all the water, only rising twelve inches above high water mark at Wilkins' Slough—the same height attained last year. The water continued to stand at this stage for twenty days at the slough, while three miles below had just reached high water mark. These facts certainly demonstrate that the river will carry off all the water with comparatively small levees. For the same laws that enable the river to get along with the water of the Wilkins' Slough will hold good in reference to others. If the stopping of the Wilkins' Slough, causing a rise of twelve inches there, makes no perceptible difference sixteen miles below in the height of the water, it is easy to see that there will be little difficulty in making the river carry the water of all the sloughs. To do this we have only to follow out the plan indicated by the operations of nature herself, that is, the filling of the sloughs and raising of the river banks. There are not less than fifty well defined sloughs between Colusa and Knight's Landing. These sloughs serve to relieve the river in times of floods, while the banks of the river and the lands in proximity to these sloughs are being raised year by year by deposits of sediment. And just as soon as the banks were sufficiently high to carry the water these sloughs naturally filled up. Everything indicates that there is not a high piece of land on the river that has not been formed by the deposits through these sloughs in times of high water. And whenever the lands became sufficiently elevated, where the sloughs discharged their waters and their deposits, the action of the water in them became sluggish or stopped, and in consequence the sloughs there naturally filled as in the same way. In order to reclaim all the land between the rivers it is only necessary to aid in pushing forward the work of nature by the operations of nature have been carrying on for centuries past. The largest of the three remaining sloughs was filled by the Reclamation Company in '70 and has so remained to the present time. It now only remains for us to fill up the two smaller sloughs, and to add a little to the height of the river banks to gain complete control of the Sacramento river; the achievement of which would be worth hundreds of thousands to the people residing between the two rivers. With a way with three of the greatest annoyances the people have to contend with: First, the high water in the tides; second, the malaria; and third the mosquitoes. And besides this, when the river is leveed it will afford irrigation at almost any season. These things being so, the lands in this district, possessing a rich alluvial soil from sea level to several feet deep, capable of producing anything in the vegetable line, must soon become the garden spot of the State.

Crannore, Feb. 1872. G. W. H.

The Alpine Chronicle says: "We have a young lady composer, not yet 'sweet sixteen,' who has set a poetic column of this paper in one afternoon, and that day the sun went down behind the mountains before four o'clock. She came into this office before she was fourteen."

The Oakland Transcript has a letter from Hon. Wm. Neely Johnson, the blind lawyer of Sacramento, which, it says, can be inspected by the curious. It is written in pencil, very legible and bold, and we know of many lawyers, who have splendid eye-sight, who can not equal it.

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